



St. Francis' College Attendance Policy (Pupils)

Introduction

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep Department and Senior School which includes Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS), Pre-prep (Key Stage 1), Prep (Key Stage 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5).

This policy aims to inform parents and staff.

Day Pupils

At St Francis' College, education is seen as a partnership between the family and the College. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for your daughter, and we look to you to support this objective. All pupils are required to be in school before 8.40am. The school day ends at 3.15pm (KS1)/3.30pm (KS2), 4.00pm for Senior School although many pupils remain later to take part in extra-curricular activities or study under the supervision of a member of staff. Pupils are normally expected to leave by 6.00pm.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 9 November 2021, a free supper is available for those students staying behind after extra-curricular clubs. This is served at 5.45pm.

With the exception of pupils in Years 12 and 13, pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip or visit or a sporting fixture, the dates of which will have been notified to the parents in advance.

Requests for absence must be made in writing and reach the school at least 7 days in advance, except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 9.00am. Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) should be sent to the Headmistress or Head of Prep at least two weeks in advance.

If your daughter is ill, please e-mail or telephone the College before 9.00am on each day of absence. She should bring a letter signed by a parent or guardian on her return to school giving a reason for the absence, if the contact was made by phone. Parents who have emailed from their registered email address can give the reason as part of the daily notification. Unless notified of an absence we will always contact parents or guardians on the first day and subsequent days of an unexplained absence to make sure that your child is safe.

We always send parents the term dates over a year in advance in order that holidays can be arranged without disrupting your daughter's education. These dates are also available on the College website. Please note that it is the Governors' policy usually not to allow holiday to be taken during term.

Boarding Pupils

The Boarding House is the centre a student's life at St. Francis' College. Students are cared for by a Head of Boarding and a team of House staff. Together, they will be responsible for students during term time, including ensuring that they are safely occupied outside normal school hours. For detailed information regarding Boarders' absence please see the Boarders' Attendance & Absence Policy.

System for Recording and Improving Attendance - Teaching Staff:

The attendance register is a legal document and the following matters are statements of policy, not guidance.

It is every teacher's professional responsibility to monitor attendance and punctuality and to apply the policy fairly and consistently, leading by example where appropriate. The expectations of all staff and how those expectations are communicated to pupils are critical for improving attendance. Good attendance is also reliant on administrative systems that accurately record attendance and where authorised and unauthorised absence can be challenged as appropriate.

Teachers' Responsibilities:

- Registers must be taken on time, 8.40 a.m. and 1.00pm (Prep) 1.30 p.m (Senior).
- Only pupils in the room are to be marked present - no blanks are to be left.
- Form Teachers must fill in codes to indicate the reason for absence.
- Form Teachers must chase absence notes. An explanation is required, by law, on pupils' return – notes should be kept in the register folder.
- Frequent absences must be monitored and discouraged. Initially an informal comment from Form Teachers, this should be positive and encouraging, followed by a phone call or email home and comments at parents evening and / or in the report.
- Form Teachers should keep a check on the number of absences, over 5% per term should automatically initiate a response from the College, in consultation with the Head of Year and Administration staff.
- On return from an extended absence Form Teachers should monitor easing back in to school and ensure the workload is balanced.

Form Teachers must make their Form aware of the following procedures:

- Pupils arriving after close of register (8:50 a.m. or 1.20 p.m. (Prep) and 1.35 p.m. (Senior)) must register at Reception
- Pupils in College but not attending registration for a valid reason, e.g. Music lesson, must go to reception to be entered in the register – Form Teachers should emphasise the importance of this for safety reasons.

Monitoring

- Heads of Year will monitor the attendance registers with the assistance of admin staff on a weekly basis.

- Initial concerns about attendance will be expressed, in writing, by the Form Tutor. Continuing concerns initiate a letter of concern by the Head of Year. In cases where improvement is not noticed, a final letter of concern will be initiated by the Deputy Head. At this point, a referral to Hertfordshire MASH will be considered.
- The Deputy Head will oversee the accurate completion of registers and compilation of attendance statistics with the support of the Heads of Year and administration staff.

System for Recording and Improving Attendance – Administrative Staff

The attendance register is a legal document and the following matters are statements of policy, not guidance.

Good attendance is reliant on administrative systems which accurately record attendance and where authorised and unauthorised absence can be challenged as appropriate. It is everyone's professional responsibility to monitor attendance and punctuality and to apply the policy fairly and consistently, leading by example where appropriate. The expectations of all staff and how those expectations are communicated to pupils are critical for improving attendance.

Administration Staff Responsibilities:

- Reception will log calls, including time, reason and identification of caller.
- Details of calls will be placed in registers/register folders.
- Administration staff will make contact after 9.00am on the first day of absence and subsequent days if no message is received.
- Absence notes are to be taken from the register folder for filing in pupil files at least half-termly.
- Administration staff will chase absence notes by: 1 week after return - issue note to girls for signing by parent / guardian, 2 weeks - letter sent home by post or email.
- Any absence of more than 3 days will automatically involve contact with home by admin staff or Head of Year and negotiation about work to be sent and how it will be delivered. This should be initiated by the College rather than parents or pupils.
- Manual register information will be entered on to the Admin System immediately registration closes.
- Attendance statistics will be generated for inclusion in Reports and for the Deputy Head/Head of Prep.

Attendance at lessons (Senior)

Absence from lessons should be checked against the attendance register or with the Form Teacher. All teachers are responsible, as part of their pastoral duties, for monitoring attendance and should pass concerns to Form Teachers or Heads of Year. Persistent or serious pastoral concerns should be passed to the Deputy Head (DSL), who oversees pastoral care.

Attendance in lessons (Prep):

Absence from lessons should be monitored by all subject teachers. Where there are any doubt or concerns the teachers should double check with the Prep administration team or with the Form Teacher. Any serious concerns should be reported to the Head of Prep and/or the Deputy Head (DSL).

Document Owner	James Nichols
Reviewed By	B Goulding
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Addendum to the Attendance Policy for Pupils

For new colds without a temperature/cough or loss of taste or smell

These students will be reviewed by the School Nurse to establish whether students need to be sent home.

Students with symptoms related to Covid-19 should take a PCR test. Similarly, students who are notified by Test and Trace and/or have a positive Lateral Flow Test need to take a PCR test and at home until a negative result is received.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>